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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/040,900	01/09/2002	William H. Harris	37697-0039	8865

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EXAMINER

PREBILIC, PAUL B

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3738

DATE MAILED: 09/24/2003

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/040,900

Applicant(s)

HARRIS ET AL.

Examiner

Paul B. Prebilic

Art Unit

3738

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 10 December 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 37-95 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 37-95 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 3738

Specification

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

On page 1, lines 6-11, the continuing data does not appear to be correct because the present application appears to be a continuation-in-part of parent application PCT/US99/16070. This is due to the fact that subject was added to the claims filed January 9, 2002 which do not have support from the specification of the parent application. Applicants are directed to the claim objection set forth below for a more complete explanation.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Objections

Claims 37-40, 42, 65-78, 80, 82-84, 89, 90, 92, 93, and 95 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 37, last line, the verb "are" should be "is" in order to correctly refer to the singular subject "thickness" therefor. Claims 38-40 have the same grammatical error.

In claims 42, 65-78, 89, 90, 92, 93, and 95, the parent application PCT/US99/16070 does support the subject matter claimed herein to a three-cup prosthesis of a shell, acetabular cup, and a femur cup. For this reason, these claims lack proper antecedent basis from the specification.

In claim 80, line 1, "comprising" should be "further comprising" since the prosthesis assembly is being further modified from that set forth in claim 79.

With regard to claims 82-84, there is no clear original support for the claimed ranges from the written description in the present application or from the

Art Unit: 3738

specification of parent application PCT/US99/16070. For this reason, the subject matter lack antecedent basis from the specification.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 37-41, 47, 56, 58-60, 64, 72, and 81-88 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

With regard to claims 37-41, on lines 4-5 of claim 37, it is not clear whether the "femur head" is positively required. It appears that the language could be interpreted either an inferential or positive recitation of the "femur head." However, the Examiner will interpret the claim language as requiring an artificial femur head because that appears to be what was intended the claim language.

With regard claim 47, the range of "between at least about 10 mm and at least about 20 mm" is considered indefinite because it is unclear whether this is an open-ended range beginning at about 10 mm or a closed range of about 10 mm to about 20 mm.

With regard to claims 56 and 72, "the cavity depth" lacks antecedent basis.

With regard to claims 57-60 and 64, in claim 57, "said mating portion" lacks antecedent basis.

Art Unit: 3738

In claims 81-88, the claimed dimensions are based upon the pelvic socket size of some unspecified patient. For this reason, the claimed dimensions cannot reasonably be ascertained.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 37, 38, 41, 42, 90 and 93 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Graham et al (US 5,549,700) in view of McKellop et al (US 6,165,220). Graham discloses shell (13) which corresponds to the acetabular cup as claimed and cup(s) (18) and/or (20) which can be 2.0 or 3.5 mm thick which correspond to the femur cup as claimed; see Figure 3 and column 8, lines 12-36. However, Graham fails to disclose a "crosslinked" UHMWPE cup material as claimed. McKellop, however, teaches that it was known to crosslink similar prosthetic cups in order to improve wear resistance; see the front page thereof as well as column 2, lines 12-18. Hence, it is the Examiner's position that it would have been obvious to crosslink the internal surface of the Graham UHMWPE cup in order to improve wear resistance.

With regard to claim 42, the acetabular cup as claimed is met by cup (18) of Graham, and the femur cup as claimed is met by combination of all segments of (20) of Graham.

Art Unit: 3738

Claims 1, 37-41, 43-59, 61-62, 64-89, 91, 92, 94, and 95 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Townley et al (US 6,096,084) in view of McKellop et al (US 6,165,220).

Townley meets the claim language where the acetabular cup as claimed is met by the porous cobalt chromium layer and/or the cement layer (301) of Townley, and the femur cup as claimed is met by the cup (300) of Townley. The cup thickness is obviously greater than 1 mm by inspection of the drawings and comparing the thickness of the cup the diameter of the ball; see Figures 1-8 and 8 as well as column 4, line 24 to column 6, line 35 and column 7, lines 54-58. However, Townley fails to disclose a "crosslinked" UHMWPE cup material as claimed. McKellop, however, teaches that it was known to crosslink similar prosthetic cups in order to improve wear resistance; see the front page thereof as well as column 2, lines 12-18. Hence, it is the Examiner's position that it would have been obvious to crosslink the internal surface of the Townley UHMWPE cup in order to improve wear resistance.

With regard to claims 41 and 42, the shell as claimed is met by the porous cobalt-chrome layer.

With regard to claims 40, 47, and 69, Townley discloses in Figure 8 a cup having a thickness about $3\text{mm}/22\text{mm}=0.14$ or 14% of the thickness of the head. Since the head can vary from 38 mm to 55 mm, the shell thickness can vary from about 5.3 mm to about 7.7 mm. Therefore, Townley fails to disclose a shell thickness of more than about 7.7 mm. However, at the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to a person of

Art Unit: 3738

ordinary skill in the art to increase the cup thickness because Applicants have not disclosed that the cup thickness provides some advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Applicants' invention to perform equally well because UHMWPE is sufficiently strong for its intended purpose at a thickness of 5 mm. Therefore, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify Townley to obtain the invention as specified in the claims.

With regard to claims 50, 75, and 79, Townley discloses a ball having a diameter between 38 mm and 55 mm. Therefore, Townley fails to disclose the ball diameters claimed. However, at the time the invention was made, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to a person of ordinary skill in the art to increase the ball diameter because Applicants have not disclosed that the 70 mm to 90 mm diameter ball provides some advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Applicants' invention to perform equally well because it would fit larger patients and give a larger wear area therefor. Therefore, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to modify Townley to obtain the invention as specified in the claims.

With regard to claims 54, 55, 70, 71, the Examiner asserts that these claimed parameters are inherently present in the material disclosed by Townley as modified by McKellop because it is the same crosslinked material claimed and disclosed.

Claim 60 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Townley and McKellop as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of DeCarlo, Jr. (US 4,524,467). Townley fails to disclose the varying degrees of movement as claimed. However, DeCarlo discloses that greater degrees of freedom with partial hemispheric portions were known to the art; see the abstract and figures. Hence, it is the Examiner's position that it would have been obvious to put partial hemispheric portions in the Townley device for the same reasons that DeCarlo does the same.

Claims 63 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Townley and McKellop as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Teinturier (US 4,385,405). Townley fails to disclose an ovoid head as claimed. However, Teinturier teaches that it was known to make contact surfaces for ovoid heads; see column 4, lines 18-26. Therefore, it would have been obvious to make ovoid heads in the Townley device in order to correspond to the shape of the cup of Teinturier.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Applicant should specifically point out the support for any amendments made to the disclosure, including the claims (MPEP 714.02 and 2163.06). Due to the procedure outlined in MPEP 2163.06 for interpreting claims, it is noted that other art may be applicable under 35 USC 102 or 35 USC 103(a) once the aforementioned issue(s) is/are addressed.

Art Unit: 3738

Applicant is respectfully requested to provide a list of all copending applications that set forth similar subject matter to the present claims. A copy of such copending claims is respectfully requested in response to this Office action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Prebilic whose telephone number is (703) 308-2905. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott, can be reached on (703) 308-2111. The fax phone number for this Technology Center is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Technology Center 3700 receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.



Paul Prebilic
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3738